

Health Care for Homeless Veterans Continuum of Care

Program Service & Structure

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELESS VETERANS (HCHV) CONTINUUM OF CARE:

The Health Care for Homeless Veterans Continuum of Care is an essential and critical part of the VHA, providing a gateway to VA and community supportive services for eligible Veterans who are homeless. HCHV Programs provide outreach, case management and Contracted Residential Services in community locations to engage homeless Veterans who have been underserved and disenfranchised. The central goal is to reduce homelessness among Veterans by conducting outreach to those who are the most vulnerable and are not currently receiving services and engaging them in treatment and rehabilitative Programs.

COUNTIES SERVED BY BATTLE CREEK CATCHMENT AREA INCLUDE:

Allegan, Barry, Branch, Berrien, Calhoun, Cass, Clinton, Eaton, Kent, Ionia, Ingham, Kalamazoo, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren.

MISSION:

The central goal of the Battle Creek VAMC Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Programs is to end homelessness among Veterans through outreach efforts and community partnerships by providing recovery-oriented and Veteran-centered care. HCHV hopes to support Veterans' return to their highest level of functioning through their engagement in treatment and rehabilitative Programs that enable them to achieve a better quality of life.

VISION:

Our vision is to become a state-of-the-art Homeless Program with an established continuum of care ranging from the provision of basic needs to clinical services. The Programs provide homeless Veterans with assistance in obtaining appropriate housing in our VA-HCHV Homeless and Grant and Per Diem Programs, HUD-VASH Program, and community placement in the community of the Veterans' choosing that is driven by the mastery of our knowledge of change, inherent challenges, and purpose while providing support and case management services. Services are rendered to our Veterans with interminable commitment, excellence, and compassion. Through strategic planning we are committed to broadening our scope to include homeless services that are specific to women Veterans and women Veterans with children.

CORE VALUES: As a matter of practice the VHA Core Values I-CARE (Integrity; Commitment; Respect; Advocacy, and Excellence) guide our practice.

- **TRUST:** Is the basis of the Veteran-Case Manager relationship, and fundamental to all therapeutic treatment, and in all that we do and say.
- **RESPECT:** To honor and hold in high regard the dignity and worth of our Veterans, their families, and our co-workers.
- **COMPASSION:** Our ability to empathize and demonstrate a caring attitude in all that we say and do.
- **COMMITMENT:** Our pledge is to assume a professional attitude and personal responsibility for the provision of services to our Veterans and their families; and
- **EXCELLENCE:** Is being exceptionally good and of the highest quality in our delivery of patient care and advocacy in everything we do.

PROGRAMS GOALS:

The VA-HCHV Homeless Programs, as they exist today, appear to exemplify the current trend towards outpatient treatment, community integration and engagement, collaborative community partnerships, and effective use of staffing and outcome goals. These efforts strive to support the Veteran's return to competitive employment and independent housing while fostering a reduction in negative life-style choices (such as substance abuse) which produce the "resolving door" of re-hospitalizations. We anticipate future expansion of the HUD-VASH Programs for rural counties, as well as the development of Homeless Programs for certain specialty population groups: Traumatic Brain Injuries; women Veterans; Veterans with children; frail and elderly Veterans.

Service to homeless Veterans continues to be listed as one of the "top five" concentrations for the current administration, is supported by the current Secretary of Veterans Health Administration, the Director of the Battle Creek VAMC, and its Social Work Service Department. Current contract partners and other community partners are encouraged to continue in their efforts to make attempts at increasing programming and securing more funds through grants proposals. Highlighted is our current inability to provide special needs services and/or housing to our new returning OEF/OIF/OND Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injuries and is a quality improvement and strategic planning goal as we work towards increasing our scope of services.

Recognizing the potential for future Contract Residential funding dollars for contracts and/or Grant & Per Diem Homeless Programs with community-based agencies which currently provide services to consumers with TBI, as well as other special needs populations would be mutually beneficial, and is a part of our strategic plan. Particularly, partnerships with those agencies which have demonstrated their expertise in providing housing and supportive services to special needs groups and are well known and established in their communities.

The HCHV Programs with the support of VISN 10 Network Homeless Continuum Program Managers and the Medical Center Director is seeking to increase our current capacity of Per Diem Only, Grant & Per Diem, and/or Contract Residential Programs by partnering with community agencies in other areas such as Benton Harbor, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Muskegon, Michigan.

Moreover, the HCHV Programs is exploring opportunities for funding permanent housing for homeless Veterans through partnerships with local community agencies which is identified as a current need. In Fiscal Year 2008, the Battle Creek VAMC received 35 HUD-VASH Section-8 vouchers. In Fiscal Year 2013, access to permanent housing for homeless Veterans was increased to include Kalamazoo, Lansing, Grant Rapids, and/or rural counties.

VA's Strategy to Eliminate Homelessness Among Veterans by 2015-VA's philosophy of "No Wrong Door" means that all Veterans seeking to prevent or get out of homelessness must have easy access to Programs and services. We must ensure that homelessness among Veterans is rare, brief, and non-recurring. Any door a Veteran comes to at the Medical Center, a Regional Office, or a Community-based Organization must offer them assistance built upon 6 Strategic Pillars:

- Outreach/Education
- Treatment
- Prevention
- Housing/Supportive Services
- Income/Employment/Benefits
- Community Partnership

Though Battle Creek has been utilizing the Housing-First Methodology, we will continue in our efforts to ensure fidelity to the model/practice which began in FY13. The HUD-VASH Program centers on the Housing-First Methodology which provides services that meet the needs of the chronically homeless Veterans, most, needy, most vulnerable. Treatment, intensive case management, and wrap around services which includes social services are provided to ensure mental health and housing stability in permanent housing. In doing so, we will ensure that the following is at the core of our delivery of care:

- Veteran choice
- Separation of housing and services
- Emphasis on recovery-oriented care
- Community integration and engagement

There is a renewed emphasis and strategy on the Housing-First Methodology and practice. In addition, there is continued focus the other evidence-based practices:

- Housing First
- Critical Time Intervention
- Harm Reduction
- Stages of Change
- Motivational Interviewing.

In addition, Veterans will be given the opportunity to participate in VA University (VAU) Programming within the Homeless Continuum of Care that promotes choice and provides them the tools and fosters independence and self-sufficiency.

VAU-style programming is the hallmark for ensuring that homeless and those at-risk for homelessness have the tools to achieve self-sufficiency and independence through individual and peer-lead empowerment and support. There is continued focus on ending homelessness through the Coordinated-entry process and By-Name List (BNL) established through ongoing collaboration with the CoCs, community partners, and key stakeholder in our twenty-county catchment area by ensuring that all homeless Veterans have ready access to homeless services that result in positive outcomes:

- Housing
- Income/Benefits
- Medical and mental health stability
- Access to appropriate treatment
- Community integration
- Social supports.

HCHV CONTINUUM OF CARE HOURS OF OPERATION; DAYS OF SERVICES; FREQUENCY OF SERVICES; PAYER SOURCES; AND FEES:

THE HCHV COC HOURS OF OPERATIONS: Are Monday through Friday; 8:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. Exceptions are made as determined by Veteran need. Frequency of services is

determined by the Veteran's treatment needs. The HCHV Programs is funded either at the National and/or local levels.

FEES: There are no required fees for participation in the Homeless Continuum of Care, except where specified by individual Programs.

Program Service and Structure are shared in a variety of ways with stakeholders which include VA internet page, the Homeless Program Reference Guide; Program Brochures, and/or Program Handbooks and/or Orientation Packets. The Scope of Services is reviewed and updated at least annually. The Battle Creek VAMC Homeless Continuum Program Manager and/or staff designees present education/training modules to allied Services at Battle Creek VAMC and in the community to present information about the Programs as well as to increase referrals. Based on the information provided to the VA-HCHV Homeless Programs Case Manager and needs that are identified, a Veteran may be eligible for other VA services, such as Psychosocial Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs, Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Treatment Program, PTSD Residential Treatment Program and PTSD Outpatient Treatment services and/or Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Although these services are separate from the HCHV Programs, staff assist Veterans by educating them about the available Programs and the process by which services may be obtained. Case Managers assist Veterans with transitions from one level of care or location to another, as needed.

The Case Manager will describe the types of opportunities available to Veterans based on the first interview and ongoing assessments and will make referrals only with the Veterans' consent.

- **ADMISSION CRITERIA:**

Veterans who are eligible to receive VA Health Care services and are homeless, at-risk for homelessness, and/or homeless with a history of mental illness, substance abuse dependence, or dually diagnosed are eligible and may benefit from services provided by the HCHV Continuum of Care. The exception to eligibility for receiving VA Health Care services is Veterans who have the Other Than Honorable Discharge status. Those Veterans can receive services through the Grant & Per Diem (G&PD) Program with the G&PD providers making the determination on whether to admit to the Program.

Special accommodations are made, when applicable, for Veterans who have the special population designation. This may require referral to community resources. Current special populations include, Women Veterans; Veterans with Criminal Sexual Conduct backgrounds, frail and elderly, DUI offenders, as well as Veterans with other legal issues, and/or Veterans with substance abuse diagnoses.

- **AVERAGE CENSUS, LENGTH OF STAY, STAFFING:**

The average census and length of stay varies by Programs. Staffing of these Programs is provided primarily by non-VA Case Managers. The Supported Housing Programs are staffed by the HCHV clinicians and HUD-VASH Case Managers.

- **WHERE DO PATIENTS COME FROM:**

Referrals may be generated from inpatient and outpatient VA Programs, penal institutions, soup kitchens, homeless shelters or missions, families, Vet Centers, county, state, and/or regional VA offices, as well as local Homeless Coalitions. Referrals are directed to the nearest HCHV outreach worker to that location, if warranted. Veterans may also be self-referred.

DESCRIPTION OF TREATMENT PROGRAMS:

Treatment Programs vary from site to site. The goal of the VA-HCHV Homeless Programs is to support homeless Veterans' return to their highest level of functioning. This may include assessing for benefits (if eligible), securing employment, money management, securing and maintaining independent housing, and maintaining a clean and sober lifestyle. Group treatment and case management as well as peer support in a "therapeutic and/or modified therapeutic community" contribute to this goal.

- **TREATMENT PROGRAMS AND VETERAN INPUT:**

Veteran input and feedback drive the treatment plan. He/she meets with the Case Manager/clinician at the VA-HCHV Homeless Programs and **together** discusses and agrees on goals and objectives. This is reflected in the treatment plan and progress notes written by the Case Manager/clinician of respective Homeless Programs.

HCHV CONTINUUM OF CARE PROGRAMS CONTACT INFORMATION:

1. **Battle Creek VA Medical Center: (269) 966-5600 or 1 (888) 214-1247**
HOMELSS WALK-IN CLINIC: (269) 966-5600 ext. 33563
HCHV: (269) 966-5600 ext. 33148
HUD-VASH: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31726, 32567, 35630, 31649, or 36432
VJOP: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32008
HVCES: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568
COORDINATED ENTRY: (269) 966-5600 ext. 33607
JESSE HOUSE: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31303
GPD & CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31602
SUD: (269) 966-5600 ext. 35631
2. **Benton Harbor VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic: (269) 934-9123**
HCHV: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32567
VJOP: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568
COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568

GPD & CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31602

3. **Wyoming VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic:** (616) 249-5300
4. **Grand Rapids Health Care for Homeless Veterans Service Center: 269-966-5600 ext. 39201**
HCHV: (269) 966-5600 ext. 39212 or 39267
HUD-VASH: (269) 966-5600 ext. 39207, 39205, 39204, 39215, 39260, 39206, or 39211
VJOP: (269) 966-5600 ext. 39214
HVCES: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568
COORDINATED ENTRY: (269) 966-5600 ext. 33607
JESSE HOUSE: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31303
GPD & CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31602
SUD: (269) 966-5600 ext. 35631
5. **Lansing VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic: (517) 267-3925**
HCHV: (269) 966-5600 ext. 37878
HUD-VASH: (269) 966-5600 ext. 37890, 39800, 37876, 39801, 37816 or 37891
VJOP: (269) 966-5600 ext. 37874
HVCES: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568
COORDINATED ENTRY: (269) 966-5600 ext. 33607
JESSE HOUSE: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31303
GPD & CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL: 269-966-5600 ext. 31602
6. **Muskegon VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic: (231) 798-4445**
HCHV: (269) 966-5600 ext. 39753
HUD-VASH: 269) 966-5600 ext. 39751 or 39752
VJOP: (269) 966-5600 ext. 39214
HVCES: (269) 966-5600 ext. 32568
COORDINATED ENTRY: (269) 966-5600 X33607
JESSE HOUSE: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31303
GPD & CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL: (269) 966-5600 ext. 31602

The following is a list of Programs and Services provided by the HCHV Continuum of Care:

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELES VETERANS WALK-IN CLINIC AT BATTLE CREEK:

The Homeless Walk-In Clinic ensures that homeless Veterans and those at risk for homelessness have access to services 40 hours weekly from 8a.m. to 4:30p.m. The Clinic is centrally located in the Homeless Services are in building 7, room 007. In addition to ready access to services, the Clinic serves as the central point for referral and information services for homeless Veterans who may need to be referred to other Programs in the Homeless Continuum of Care and/or at the Medical Center and community partners.

Additionally, there are four (4) HCHV Outreach Case Managers and/or Outreach Workers who are responsible for ongoing street outreach throughout our 22-county catchment area. The goal of street outreach is to identify unsheltered Veterans and refer them to appropriate Mental Health, Primary Care, Substance Abuse, Residential Treatment services, and/or to permanent housing.

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELESS-GRAND RAPIDS SERVICE CENTER:

Whether you need immediate assistance, just looking for more information, or interested in finding out how you can help eliminate Veteran homelessness-VA is here for you. The HCHV-GR Service Center provides a broad range of services to homeless Veterans which include the following:

- **Prevention Services:** Veterans seeking help must complete an application and provide a DD-214 which shows a positive discharge and active duty time of 180 days. Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) is available at the Service Center. The 2012 SSVF Notice of Funding Availability introduced a new category of Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) to be offered to eligible participants beginning October 1, 2013. *General Housing Stability Assistance* means the provision of goods or payment of expenses not included in other sections, but which are directly related to supporting a participant's housing stability. This is a new category that may offer a maximum of \$1,500 in assistance per participant. Such assistance, when not available through existing mainstream and community resources, may include:
 - (1) Items necessary for a participant's life or safety that are provided to the participant by a grantee on a temporary basis in order to address the participant's emergency (limited to \$500 per SSVF Program under 38 CFR 62.34).
 - (2) Expenses associated with gaining or keeping employment such as obtaining uniforms, tools, certifications, and licenses.
 - (3) Expenses associated with moving into permanent housing, such as obtaining basic kitchen utensils, bedding, and other supplies; and
 - (4) Expenses necessary for securing appropriate permanent housing such as fees for applications, brokerage fees, or background checks.
- **Housing Services:** The Service Center provides information and referral services for temporary and permanent housing services. Veterans are assessed for appropriate choices of housing and intensity of services. HUD-VASH is a voucher-based Program to provide housing to Veterans based upon identified criteria. Community Rebuilders provides housing with Case Management Services being provided by the HCHV staff. The Community

Rebuilders Per Diem Only and Contract Residential Services Programs are transitional housing for single Veterans and Veterans with families utilizing a Transition in Place Model.

- **Treatment Services:** The Service Center provided individual and group treatment services for a broad range of issues to include substance abuse, mental health disorders, and issues related to chronic homelessness. Other services include nutritional education, health education related to chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, etc.
- **Employment & Job Training:** A Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES) Coordinator and Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program are available at the Service Center to provide a system of support for Veterans in regards to gaining and maintaining employment by job coaching, job retention, employment search assistance, resume assistance and interviewing skills. HVCES is dedicated to helping Veterans obtain and maintain competitive employment by providing quality vocational and rehabilitative services. Additionally, Michigan Rehabilitative Services has a representative available upon referral for help in obtaining employment services focused on those Veterans who may have a felony conviction.
- **Benefits & Other Services:** Through our collaboration with the VBA, the VBA Outreach teams are available biweekly at several homeless program locations to assist Veterans with their VA Claims. A Veterans Service Officers from the Marine Corps League is at the Service Center every Tuesday from 9:00a.m. to 3:00p.m. on Tuesdays to help Veterans file for service-connected and non-service-connected benefits. The Service Center also partners with the Social Security Administration (SSA) to expedite claims for Social Security Disability. The Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) Program is also available at the Service Center to provide financial and other supportive services to homeless Veterans and/or their families.
- **Other Resources:** The Service Center has a Food Pantry, clothing locker, and personal care items that are provided to homeless Veterans who have the need for such items. Help with obtaining furniture and other household items are available for those Veterans who have obtained housing. The Battle Creek VA also provides dental care to homeless Veterans who are residents of the Per Diem Only Program through Community Rebuilders and who have met criteria for such services. Community dental resources and other resources for services are also available through referrals.

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELESS-LANSING SERVICE CENTER:

The Health Care for Homeless Veterans Lansing Service Center provides a broad range of services to homeless Veterans which include the following:

- **Veterans Justice Outreach Program (VJOP):** VJOP is designed to collaborate with local justice system partners to identify Veterans that enter the criminal justice system and need treatment services rather than incarceration. VJO Coordinator works with Justice-involved

Veterans which is any Veteran who has contact with the judicial system, law enforcement, or jail system.

- **Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES):** VA created the Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES) Program to make it easier than ever for business and industry to find, interview and hire job-ready Veterans exiting homelessness:
 - CECs increase Veterans' likelihood of employment success by connecting them to job-related resources and career opportunities and a range of supports from VA and the community, including Health Care, housing and social services; and
 - They also collaborate with VA and non-VA partners—Compensated Work Therapy, VR&E, American Job Centers, Department of Labor homeless Veteran grantees, workforce agencies, and faith-based and community organizations—to identify gaps in competitive employment services for homeless Veterans.
- **Peer Support Specialist:** The Peer Support Specialist is a trained and certified Veteran who is currently in mental health and/or substance abuse recovery who works with the homeless team. A Peer Specialists perform a variety of therapeutic and supportive tasks that include assisting their peers in articulating their goals for recovery, learning and practicing new skills, helping them monitor their progress, assisting them in their treatment, modeling effective coping techniques and self-help strategies based on the specialist's own recovery experience, and supporting them in advocating for themselves to obtain effective services.
- **HUD-VASH:** The mission of the HUD-VASH program at the Battle Creek VAMC is to provide comprehensive case management services that reduce substance abuse and psychiatric relapses, improve the health status and social integration of chronically homeless Veterans, and facilitate access to community resources. The improvement of these psychosocial issues, through community-based living with case management increases the Veteran's capacity to function at their highest level.
- **Grant & Per Diem (GPD) and Contract Programing:** GPD and Contract programs are VA funded services with community agencies to address the causes and effects of homelessness in a community-based setting that provides direct services in a safe environment which supports recovery and meets the needs of homeless Veterans. Selected GPD programs offer services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, and services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women Veterans, etc. Veterans in the Grant & Per Diem Program may be charged a prescribed program fee.
- **Community Contract Services:** Community Contract programs are VA funded services with community agencies that address needed services for homeless Veterans such as:

- ✓ Outreach
- ✓ Group Activities (such as life skills, social skills, job club, and vocational counseling)
- ✓ Case Management
- ✓ Life Skills
- ✓ Recovery
- ✓ Transition Planning and Support Service

- **JESSE HOUSE:**

The Jesse House Program is a transitional housing collaborative partnership among the Battle Creek Housing Commission (BCHC), the City of Battle Creek, and the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. Veterans must meet the admission criteria before entering the Jesse House Program as determined by the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. The Jesse House Program is designed to build upon the foundation of Recovery skills participants have developed and help them be successful in an independent living environment. Services are provided to enhance continued recovery from drug/alcohol dependency and/or mental health disorders; employability; consumer skills; money management; community involvement; continued personal and interpersonal development; and physical and mental health. Veterans are required to pay a prescribed program fee to the Battle Creek Housing Commission.

- **SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER (SUD):**

SUD is an addiction recovery Programs that is available to Veterans who are enrolled in a HCHV Programs. The SUD Programs offers individual and group therapy to Veterans who struggle with addiction issues past or present. Veterans should be motivated to make a change in their lives regarding substance use. All Veterans will be assessed for services and then appropriate referrals made depending on level of care determined by the SUD Specialist.

HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT-VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (HUD-VASH):

HUD-VASH is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The vouchers are distributed through the local Public Housing Authorities. The HUD-VASH voucher is like the Section 8 Programs but is unique in that it requires a Veteran recipient to participate in VA case management for mental health, substance abuse and primary health concerns and/or other disability. There are cur-

rently HUD- VASH vouchers allocated to Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon.

VETERANS JUSTICE OUTREACH PROGRAM (VJOP):

VJOP is designed to collaborate with local justice system partners to identify Veterans that enter the criminal justice system and need treatment services rather than incarceration. VJO works with Justice-Involved Veterans which is any Veteran who has contact with the judicial system, law enforcement, or jail system. “The purpose of the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) initiative is to avoid unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible Veterans in contact with the criminal justice system have access to: VHA mental health and substance abuse services when clinically indicated, and other VA services and benefits as appropriate.” *Source: Department of Veterans Affairs, April 30, 2009, Under Secretary for Health’s Information Letter.*

HOMELESS VETERANS DENTAL INITIATIVE (HVDI):

Homeless Veterans who have been in designated Homeless Programs for 60 or more consecutive days may be eligible for specified dental services. A Dental Consult from the Primary Care Provider is required. The Homeless Programs Coordinator determines eligibility.

HOMELESS VETERANS COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (HVCES):

VA created the Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services (HVCES) Program to make it easier than ever for business and industry to find, interview and hire job-ready Veterans exiting homelessness:

- CECs increase Veterans’ likelihood of employment success by connecting them to job-related resources and career opportunities and a range of supports from VA and the community, including Health Care, housing and social services; and
- They also collaborate with VA and non-VA partners—Compensated Work Therapy, VR&E, American Job Centers, Department of Labor homeless Veteran grantees, workforce agencies, and faith-based and community organizations—to identify gaps in competitive employment services for homeless Veterans.

GRANT & PER DIEM (GPD) AND CONTRACT RESIDENTIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS:

GPD and Contract Programs are VA funded services with community agencies to address the causes and effects of homelessness in a community-based setting that provides direct services in a safe environment which supports recovery and meets the needs of homeless Veterans. Selected GPD Programs offers services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, and services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women

Veterans, etc. The Grant Per Diem and Contract Programs facilities are in Lansing, Battle Creek, Ionia, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids.

The HCHV Programs provides Outreach Brokering, Referral & Information services, and Adjunct Case Management services, as needed, to Veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Licensed Social Workers staff the HCHV Programs Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30pm. The Outreach Workers also visit community sites or areas where homeless persons are located, such as shelters, soup kitchens, drop-in centers and/or other places where homeless persons are located to reach out to Veterans. An interview is required to determine a person's eligibility for VA services.

At point of Intake, the Outreach Worker, and/or the HCHV clinicians may determine that a Veteran would be better served by other VA or community Programs, such as Day Treatment Services, residential care or treatment Programs, or vocational services, and will refer Veterans to these Programs as needed.

For eligible Veterans, in VA-HCHV Homeless Programs, the HCHV Programs provides adjunct case management services, as needed, at multiple levels of care. All eligible interested Veterans are enrolled in the HCHV Programs and referred to the Battle Creek VAMC and/or Community Based Outpatient Clinics for assessment of physical and mental health. VAMC and CBOC referrals are also made for assistance with substance abuse dependency and mental health problems as well to ensure the provision of quality care for our homeless Veterans. Homeless Veterans are also eligible for dental care following their participation in a VA-HCHV Homeless Programs for a minimum of 60 consecutive days with documented progress toward their treatment goals. Progress towards treatment goals is documented by the Case Manager of the VA-HCHV Homeless Programs.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

While the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Programs is primarily concerned with improving the lives and conditions of at-risk Veterans within our twenty-two-county catchment area, it is also concerned with the community. Collaborative efforts and involvement with organizations like the Greater Battle Creek and Calhoun County Homeless Coalition by having a vote, in addition, to our annual participation in the Greater Battle Creek Homeless Coalition Homeless Health Fair and Veterans Stand Downs in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Lansing, and Battle Creek to ensure that the HCHV Programs helps homeless Veterans as well as underprivileged women, children and non-Veterans in our catchment area.

OUTREACH AND CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES:

Case Managers and/or the Outreach Worker make visits to community sites where homeless or at-risk persons go for help. These include, but are not limited to, shelters, soup kitchens, drop in

shelters, and job services. Here, the Outreach Worker talks with Veterans to help them decide what services might be best for them personally. He/she educate Veterans concerning services available and procedures for accessing them, both within the VA and other community services. The Outreach Worker may also work with the Veteran to develop a Service Plan to define the goals with which help is desired.

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT:

Veterans who are interested in linkage with VA or community vocational services and/or who are ready to work on recovery from homelessness may be referred to a transitional residence Per Diem Only, Grant and Per Diem Programs, for a period not to exceed twenty-four months, and/or Contract Residential Programs not to exceed six months. Room and board are provided, as well as case management for linkage to needed community and employment services as well as social and recreational activities. The HCHV Case Manager will work with the VA-contracted HCHV Homeless Programs staff to help Veterans accomplish their identified service goals. Rules for referrals and placement will be reviewed with the Veterans if found eligible for referral. Abstinence from use of alcohol or drugs is required in such residences as is compliance with all house rules and regulations.

SUPPORTED HOUSING:

Veterans who are ready for independent living and who have income to pay rent and cover personal expenses may be referred to Supported Housing sites, such as the Jesse Houses, as well as take advantage of public and private housing opportunities. HCHV Case Managers will provide case management services as needed for up to five years, depending on which type of housing is selected and available. These Programs also have rules, which will be explained before referrals are made and again by the in-house staff. Chronically homeless Veterans may be referred to the HUD-VASH Programs. Veterans in this Program will be case managed by the VA HUD-VASH Case Manager as a requirement of their participation in the Programs.

FUTURE OF THE PROGRAMS:

VA's Strategy to Eliminate Homelessness Among Veterans

- VA's philosophy of "no wrong door" means that all Veterans seeking to prevent or get out of homelessness must have easy access to Programs and services. Any door a Veteran comes to-at the Medical Center, a Regional Office, or a Community Organization-must offer them assistances.
- Built upon 6 Strategic Pillars:
 - Outreach/Education
 - Treatment

- Prevention
- Housing/Supportive Services
- Income/Employment/Benefits
- Community Partnerships

The VA-HCHV Homeless Programs, as they exist today, appear to exemplify the current trend towards outpatient treatment, collaborative community partnerships, and effective use of staffing and outcome goals. These efforts strive to support the Veteran's return to competitive employment and independent housing while fostering a reduction in negative lifestyle choices (such as substance abuse) which produce the "resolving door" of re-hospitalizations. We anticipate future expansion of the HUD-VASH Programs as well as the development of Homeless Programs for certain specialty population groups: Traumatic Brain Injuries; women Veterans; and Veterans with children.

Service to homeless Veterans continues to be listed as one of the "top five" concentrations for the current administration, is supported by the current Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Battle Creek VAMC and its Social Work Service Department.

Current contract partners and other community partners are encouraged to continue in their efforts to make attempts at increasing programming and securing more funds through grant proposals. Highlighted is our current inability to provide special needs services and/or housing to our new returning OEF/OIF Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injuries and is a quality improvement and strategic planning goal as we work towards increasing our scope of services. Recognizing the potential for future Contract Residential funding dollars for contracts and/or Grant & Per Diem Homeless Programs with community-based agencies which currently provide services to consumers with TBI as well as other special needs populations would be mutually beneficial and is a part of our strategic plan.

Particularly, partnerships with those agencies which have demonstrated their expertise in providing housing and supportive services to special needs groups and are well known and established in their communities.

To Date, the Medallion Management Group in concert with Michigan Housing State Housing Development Authority has successfully developed the Silver Star Apartments using an Enhance Use Lease Agreement with the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. Medallion Management Group engaged in a phased-approach to permanent-supportive housing for Veterans. In September 2009, the first 75 units were unveiled and filled within 40 days. The Grand Opening for the unveiling of the additional 100 units was on Veterans Day, November 11, 2013. To date, Silver Star Apartments has the total capacity of 175 single units of housing for Veterans.

The “Transition in Place” housing model offers residents housing in which support services transition out of the residence over time, rather than the resident. This leaves the resident in place at the residence and not forced to find other housing in 24 months or less. This model does not support discharge planning that would have the Veteran transition in place to HUD-VASH as the HUD-VASH Program targets a Veteran population in need of specialized case management.

The concept of “Transition in Place” is for your agency to convert existing suitable apartment style housing where homeless Veteran participants would receive time-limited supportive services optimally for a period of 6-12 months, never to exceed 24 months, into a permanent housing outcome for the participant. Upon transition housing/Programs completion the Veteran must be able to “transition in place” by assuming the lease or other long-term agreement which enables the unit in which he or she resides to be considered the Veteran’s permanent housing.

Transition in Place/Scattered-Site Housing: On 10/1/13, 27 Veterans moved from Exodus Place to scattered sites in and around the Grand Rapids area, offering the option to Veterans to transition in place. On 11/1/13, Goodwill officially transitions their PDO grant to Community Rebuilders (CR). CR has been doing scattered-site housing and gave data that they have a 92% success rate of consumers transitioning to and remaining in independent housing for at least one year. Average length of stay in transitional housing with CR is 6 months. This opens up opportunities for Veteran families, zero income Veterans, and Veterans who have barriers making it hard to secure independent housing.

On February 18, 2020. VA’s GPD Program published a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in the Federal Register. This NOFA provided approximately \$40 million in funding for eligible organizations to provide transitional housing beds utilizing the Transition in Place (TIP) housing model for Veterans who are homelessness or at risk for becoming homeless. Community Rebuilders, one of current GPD and Contract Residential Services provider, was awarded a grant for 20 beds which was activated on November 29, 2020.

Battle Creek VAMC has, in conjunction with the VA National Directive, delineated Performance Measures that are not only Medical Center wide, but also specific to the Health Care for Homeless Veterans Programs.